This talk will consider how Canada’s Charter of Rights influences the shaping of public policy in Canada, with a comparison of Canada to Australia, where there is no national Bill of Rights. Professor Allan will argue that the Charter is, on the whole, a negative influence.

James Allan holds the oldest named chair at the University of Queensland School of Law in Australia. He practiced law in a Toronto law firm and at the Bar in London before shifting to teaching. Allan has published widely in the areas of legal philosophy and constitutional law, including in all the top English language legal philosophy journals in the US, the UK, Canada and Australia, much the same being true of constitutional law journals as well. Allan’s recent book, a monograph for the Ashgate Applied Legal Philosophy series published in June 2011, is entitled The Vantage of Law. He also writes widely for newspapers and weeklies, including The Australian, The Spectator Australia and Quadrant.